

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: PG 70-80 Building Date: pre-1861
Building Name: MD 450/Defense Highway
Location: Annapolis Road, from Lanham (MD 564) to Bowie (MD 3)

Public/Transportation/Occupied/Good/Accessible

Description

MD 450/Defense Highway extends, in its entirety, from Bladensburg to Annapolis, Maryland. The resource, within the project area, is a modern roadway that stretches from Whitfield Chapel Road to Seabrook Road in Lanham and from Enterprise Road (MD 193) to MD 3 near Bowie, a total distance of approximately 6.5 miles. A majority of MD 450 can be characterized by a mix of residential development with adjacent nodes of commercial and retail businesses. In these areas, the highway consists of four to five lanes of asphalt highway with turning ramps, concrete curbing, and modern mercury/sodium street lights. Some sections of the highway have been divided with a center grass or concrete median. The remaining sections of MD 450 can be characterized by two lanes of asphalt roadway with 3 foot gravel shoulders surrounded by young wooded and agricultural areas. The only bridge structure greater than 50 years of age identified in the Collington Bridge over the Conrail Railroad.

Significance

MD 450/Defense Highway has characteristics of both a cultural route and an engineered route. It is a cultural route in that it grew out of vernacular need for a route between Bladensburg and points east, especially the capital at Annapolis. However, during the twentieth century the route has been "engineered" to meet the demands of automobile travel and increased development in the vicinity. Engineered elements include the design of the current softened route and the current materials and workmanship of the physical components of the road.

While the property is associated with the theme of nineteenth century transportation developments in Prince George's County, it lacks sufficient integrity to illustrate this association. In addition, the resource illustrates the use of modern highway design, materials, and workmanship, and it no longer retains sufficient integrity to illustrate any historically significant design elements. The resource is not recommended as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Maryland Historical Trust

State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. PG 70-80

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

1. Name

(indicate preferred name)

historic Bladensburg-Annapolis Road

and/or common MD 450/Defense Highway (pref.)

2. Location

street and number Annapolis Road, from Lanham (MD 564) to Bowie (MD 3)

☐ not for publication

city, town Lanham, Bowie

☒ vicinity of

congressional district: 17

state Maryland

county: Prince George's

3. Classification

Category

- ☒ district
☐ building(s)
☐ structure
☐ site
☐ object

Ownership

- ☒ public
☐ private
☐ both

Status

- ☒ occupied
☐ unoccupied
☐ work in progress

Present Use

- ☐ agriculture
☐ commercial
☐ educational
☐ entertainment
☐ government
☐ industrial
☐ military
☐ museum
☐ park
☐ private residence
☐ religious
☐ scientific
☒ transportation
☐ other

Public Acquisition

- ☐ in process
☐ being considered
☒ not applicable

Accessible

- ☐ yes: restricted
☒ yes: unrestricted
☐ no

4. Owner of Property

(give names and mailing addresses of ALL owners)

name Maryland State Highway Administration

street/number 707 North Calvert Street

telephone no. (410) 545-8559

city, town Baltimore

state and zip code Maryland, 21202

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's

Liber:

street/number:

Folio:

city, town Upper Marlboro

state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date

survey scope

depository for survey records

city, town

state

7. Description

Survey No. PG 70-80

Condition <input type="checkbox"/> excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good <input type="checkbox"/> fair <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> ruins <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	Check one <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	Check one <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site <input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move?
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Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

MD 450/Defense Highway extends, in its entirety, from Bladensburg to Annapolis, Maryland. The resource, within the project area, is a modern roadway that stretches from Whitfield Chapel Road to Seabrook Road in Lanham and from Enterprise Road (MD 193) to MD 3 near Bowie, a total distance of approximately 6.5 miles. The current MD 450 highway, for the most part, follows the route of the highway established by at least 1861 (Martenet 1861). The area in this section of MD 450 is characterized by flat to rolling terrain with an intermix of commercial areas, retail areas, suburban residential developments, small groupings of young wooded areas, non-developed open areas, and agricultural areas.

A majority of MD 450 can be characterized by a mix of residential development with adjacent nodes of commercial and retail businesses. In these areas the highway consists of four to five lanes of asphalt highway with turning ramps, concrete curbing, and modern mercury/sodium street light (See photos, negative #HP99-078:15, 16, and 17). Some sections of the highway have been divided with a center grass or concrete median (See photos, negative #HP99-078:20, 21, and 22).

The remaining sections of MD 450 can be characterized by two lanes of asphalt roadway with 3 foot gravel shoulders (See photos, negative #HP99-078:14 and 19) surrounded by young wooded and agricultural areas. The only bridge structure greater than 50 years of age identified is the Collington Bridge (See photos, negative #HP99-045:2 and 5) over the Conrail Railroad. It is located in a two lane section of MD 450 between Laurel-Bowie Road and Church Road and will be bypassed by the proposed improvements to MD 450.

8. Significance

Survey No. PG 70-80

Period	Areas of Significance			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates	Builder/Architect
pre-1861	Unknown

check: Applicable Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D

and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance:

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The colony of Maryland began to develop roads, in addition to its waterways, as transportation routes in the eighteenth century. The post road to Philadelphia (now US 1), roads leading to county courthouses, and "rolling" roads (used to roll tobacco hogsheads to a dock) were among the earliest public roads in the county (Watson 1962: 33).

Other roads developed to connect various points in the county. An early and important road illustrated in a 1794 map connects Bladensburg and "Governor's Bridge" (Griffith 1794). At this time, Bladensburg was one of the most developed towns in the county and "Governor's Bridge" was a preferred crossing of the Patuxent River, particularly if one were heading to the state capital at Annapolis. This road is similar to the present route of Defense Highway (MD 450) east of what is known today as Buena Vista (labeled "Baldwins" tavern on the 1794 map). West of Buena Vista, however, the historic road diverges to the southeast to follow a line closer to the present day John Hanson Highway (US 50).

In 1828, a survey of roads was conducted for the Maryland General Assembly. Susan Pearl has examined these records and reported on them in the historic context paper entitled, "Early Roads in Prince George's County, 1696-1900" (Pearl 1991: 21-28). She did not discuss the Bladensburg-Governor's Bridge Road in her analysis of the records.

The earliest available map illustrating Prince George's County is the 1861 map by Simon J. Martenet (Pearl 1991: 21; Martenet 1861). By 1861, the route of present-day Defense Highway (MD 450) is clearly visible. Also established are Post Offices at Collington and Buena Vista. Finally, the Holy Trinity Church (labeled "P. Ep. Ch.") and Sacred Heart Church (labeled "Cath. Ch.") are identified. It is also interesting that the bridge over the Patuxent River near the Sacred Heart Church is labeled "Priest's Bridge." This map further indicates that a network of roadways had developed in the county by 1861. Roadways radiate like spokes of a wheel around developed towns like Bladensburg and Upper Marlborough, the county seat. In more rural areas, like the project area, there are fewer roads illustrated, but they connect to the towns from which another route can be taken.

The most detailed maps available of the project area during the nineteenth century are those included in the 1878 atlas by G.M. Hopkins (Hopkins 1878). The project area is illustrated on three maps: the 14th District, the Kent (13th) District, and the Queen Anne (7th) District. These maps illustrate that the route of the Bladensburg-Annapolis Road is much the same as the route of Defense Highway (MD 450) today. (Continued)

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended: _____ Eligibility not recommended: X

Criteria: A B C D Consideration: A B C D E F G None

Comments: _____

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services
 Reviewer, NR Program

Date: 1/21/00
 Date: 11/16/00

8. Significance (continued)

Survey No. PG 70-80

The most marked difference is at the present-day intersection of Enterprise Road (MD 193). The 1878 maps illustrate this intersection as T-shaped, while the current intersection has been softened. Another historic-period map, namely the Maryland Geological Survey Map of 1914, illustrates this intersection in this same way. However, by 1927, the intersection was softened through the construction of a bypass. This new route and the remnant of the old route are illustrated on the Maryland Geological Survey maps of 1927 and 1936. By 1965, the remnant of the old route had been abandoned and was not depicted on the USGS 7.5' Quadrangle Map of that year.

It was also during the early part of the twentieth century that the workmanship and materials of the old road were likely updated. The State Roads Commission, predecessor to the State Highway Administration, was formed in 1908. Its agenda included compiling a system of arterial highways, modernizing old highways to serve automobiles and trucks, and building new highways to accommodate motorized vehicular traffic. "The State had spent \$157,993,420 for roads alone up to September 30, 1938" (Writers Program 1940: 89). At this time it was also said that "no farm of Maryland is more than two miles from a hard-surfaced road, except in several swampy areas of the Eastern Shore and in some parts of Allegany and Garrett Counties" (Writers Program 1940: 89). Despite these improvements, it was further noted that "narrow-curving, dangerous main highways, still following horse-and-buggy trails, were inadequate for the tremendous flow of modern traffic" (Writers Program 1940: 90).

In 1940, the Writers Program prepared a tour of the Annapolis-Bladensburg road, then known as US 50. The route was described as follows: "Winding two-lane [sic] asphalt-or concrete-paved roadbed. Accommodations limited. East of Bladensburg this road was built in 1926 to replace an older and much longer one, and because it links the U.S. Naval Academy with the National Capital, it was called the Defense Highway. It passes through a milling wooded country with here and there a patch of level ground on which tobacco or vegetables are grown, but for the most part pine-covered clay bluffs and some swampy ground dominate the scene east of Bowie. Sycamores, pines, dogwood, sumac, and honeysuckle flourish in this region" (Writers Program 1940: 469).

After the construction of the John Hanson Highway in 1955 (Callcott 1985: 67), the new road took the designation of US 50, and Defense Highway because MD 450.

Paul Daniel Marriott has identified three categories of old roads: aesthetic routes, engineered routes, and cultural routes. In addition to these three discrete categories, he notes that some roads may have characteristics of more than one of the categories (Marriott 1998). The Defense Highway (MD 4500) has characteristics of both a cultural route and an engineered route. It is a cultural route in that it grew out of a vernacular need for a route between Bladensburg and points east, especially the capital at Annapolis. However, during the twentieth century the route has been "engineered" to meet the demands of automobile travel and increased development in the vicinity. Engineered elements include the design of the current softened route (see especially the discussion of the intersection with Enterprise Road above) and the current materials and workmanship of the physical components of the road.

NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY EVALUATION

While the property is associated with the theme of nineteenth century transportation developments in Prince George's County, it lacks sufficient integrity to illustrate this association (Criterion A). The property is not known to be associated with the lives of persons significant in the local, state, or national past (Criterion B). The property does not embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; represent the work of a master; or possess high artistic values. The resource illustrates the use of modern highway design, materials, and workmanship. Therefore it no longer retains sufficient integrity to illustrate any historically significant design elements (Criterion C). Finally, the property is not likely to yield information important in local, state, or national prehistory or history (Criterion D). Because the resource lacks sufficient integrity to meet the Criteria for Evaluation (A, B, C, and/or D), the resource is not recommended as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. PG 70-80

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name Lanham, Bowie

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Katry Harris	Architectural Historian	
organization	Michael Baker Jr., Inc.	date	06/08/2000 4:45:48 PM
street/number	420 Rouser Road	telephone	412-269-4600
city or townr	Coraopolis	state	Pennsylvania

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature was to found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, ARTicle 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: **DHCP/DHCD**
Maryland Historical Trust
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023

9. Major Bibliographical References (continued)

Survey No.:

PG 70-80

Callcott, George H.

1985 *Maryland & America, 1940 to 1980*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland.

Griffith, Dennis

1794 "Map of the State of Maryland." (MdHR G 1213-356). Reprinted in *The Hammond-Harwood House Atlas of Historical Maps of Maryland, 1608-1908*. By Edward C. Papenfuse and Joseph M. Coale, III. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland.

Hopkins, Griffith Morgan

1878 *Atlas of Prince George's County, Maryland, 1878*. Edited by Frank F. White, Jr. G.M. Hopkins, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Reprinted 1975. Prince George's County Historical Society, Riverdale, Maryland.

Marriott, Paul Daniel

1998 *Saving Historic Roads: Design & Policy Guidelines*. Preservation Press and John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, New York.

Martenet, Simon J.

1861 "Martenet's Map of Prince George's County." (MdHR G 1213-463). Reprinted in *The Hammond-Harwood House Atlas of Historical Maps of Maryland, 1608-1908*. By Edward C. Papenfuse and Joseph M. Coale, III. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland.

Maryland Geological Survey

1914 *Map of Prince George's County and District of Columbia Showing the Topography and Election Districts*. Maryland Geological Survey, Baltimore, Maryland. On file at the Maryland Room, McKeldin Library, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland.

1927 *Map of Prince George's County and District of Columbia Showing the Topography and Election Districts*. Maryland Geological Survey, Baltimore, Maryland. On file at the Maryland Room, McKeldin Library, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland.

1936 *Map of Prince George's County and District of Columbia Showing the Topography and Election Districts*. Maryland Geological Survey, Baltimore, Maryland. On file at the Maryland Room, McKeldin Library, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland.

Pearl, Susan G.

1991 "Early Roads in Prince George's County, 1696-1900." Short paper found in *Historic Contexts in Prince George's County*. Historic Preservation Section, Prince George's County Planning Department. June 1990. Revised August 1991.

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)

1957 *Bowie, Md. 7.5' Quadrangle Map*. Revised 1993.

1965 *Lanham, Md. 7.5' Quadrangle Map*. Revised 1993.

Watson, James Douglas

1962 *Prince George's County Past and Present*. Federal Lithograph Co., Washington, D.C.

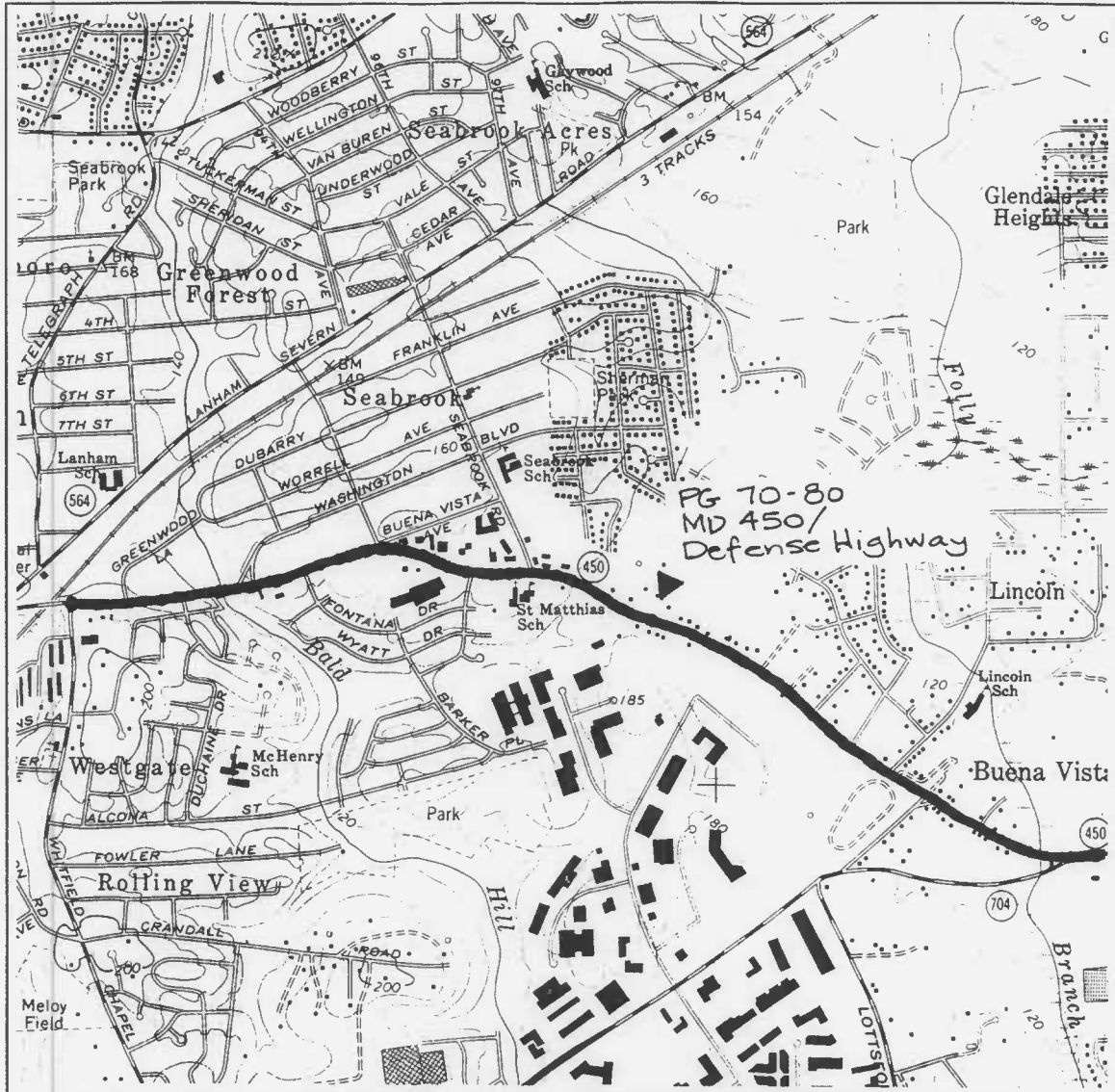
Writer's Program

1940 *Maryland: A Guide to the Old Line State*. Compiled by workers of the Writer's Program of the Work Projects Administration in the State of Maryland. Oxford University Press, New York, New York.

Survey No. PG 70-80 (1 of 4)

Location Map

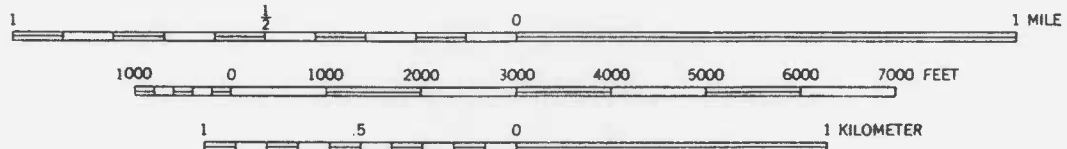
Resource Name MD 450/Defense Highway



LANHAM, MD.
38076-H7-TF-024

1965
REVISED 1993
DMA 5661 IV NE-SERIES V833

SCALE 1:24000

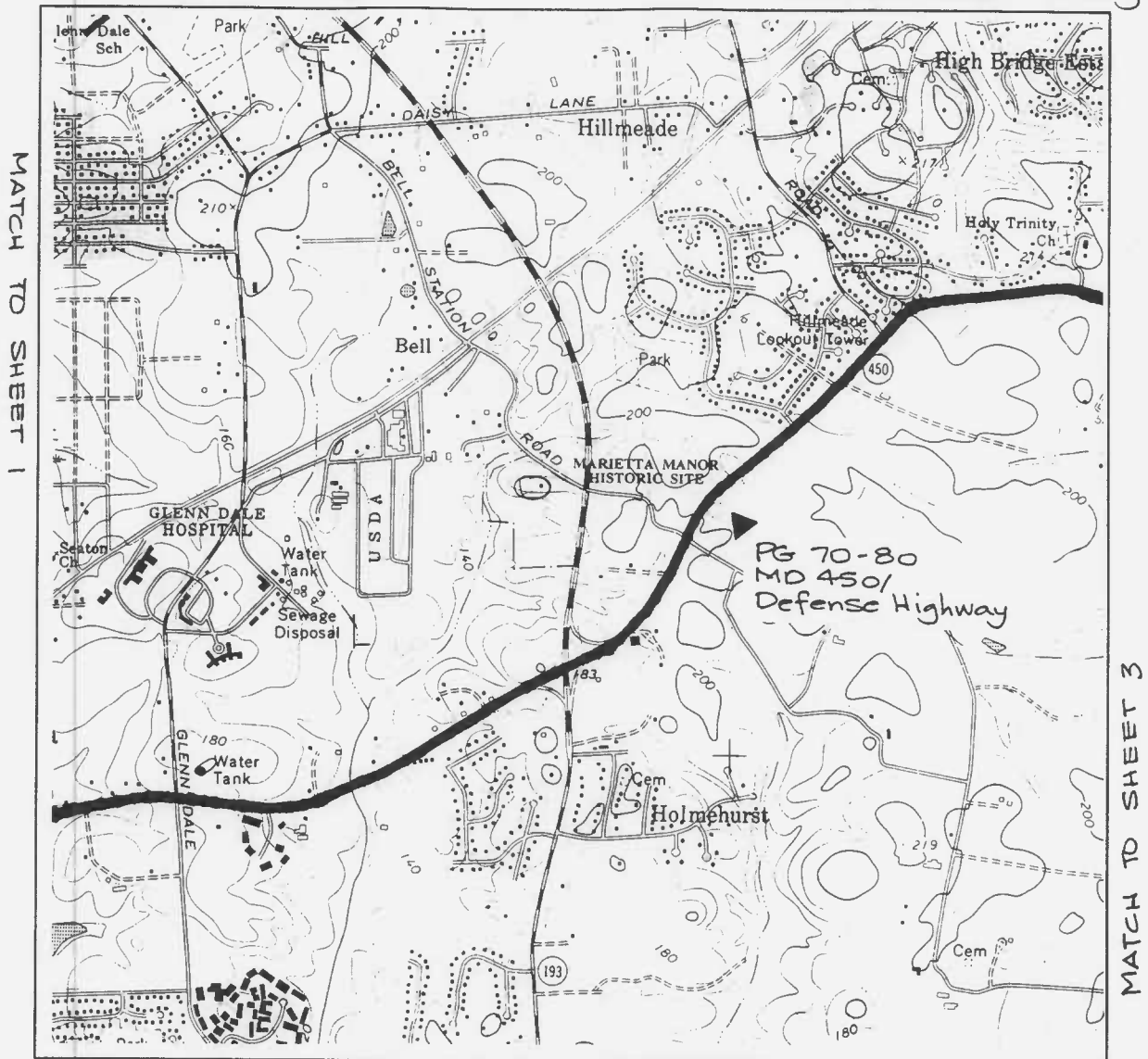


CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

Survey No. PG 70-80 (2 of 4)

Location Map

Resource Name MD 450/Defense Highway



LANHAM, MD.

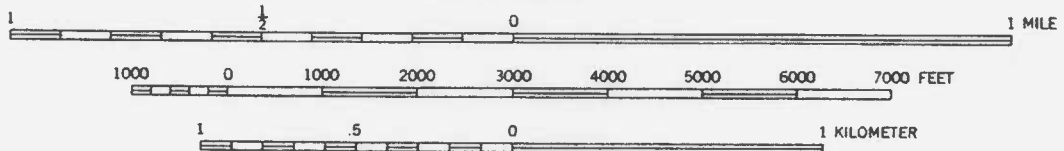
38076-H7-TF-024

1965

REVISED 1993

DMA 5661 IV NE-SERIES V833

SCALE 1:24000



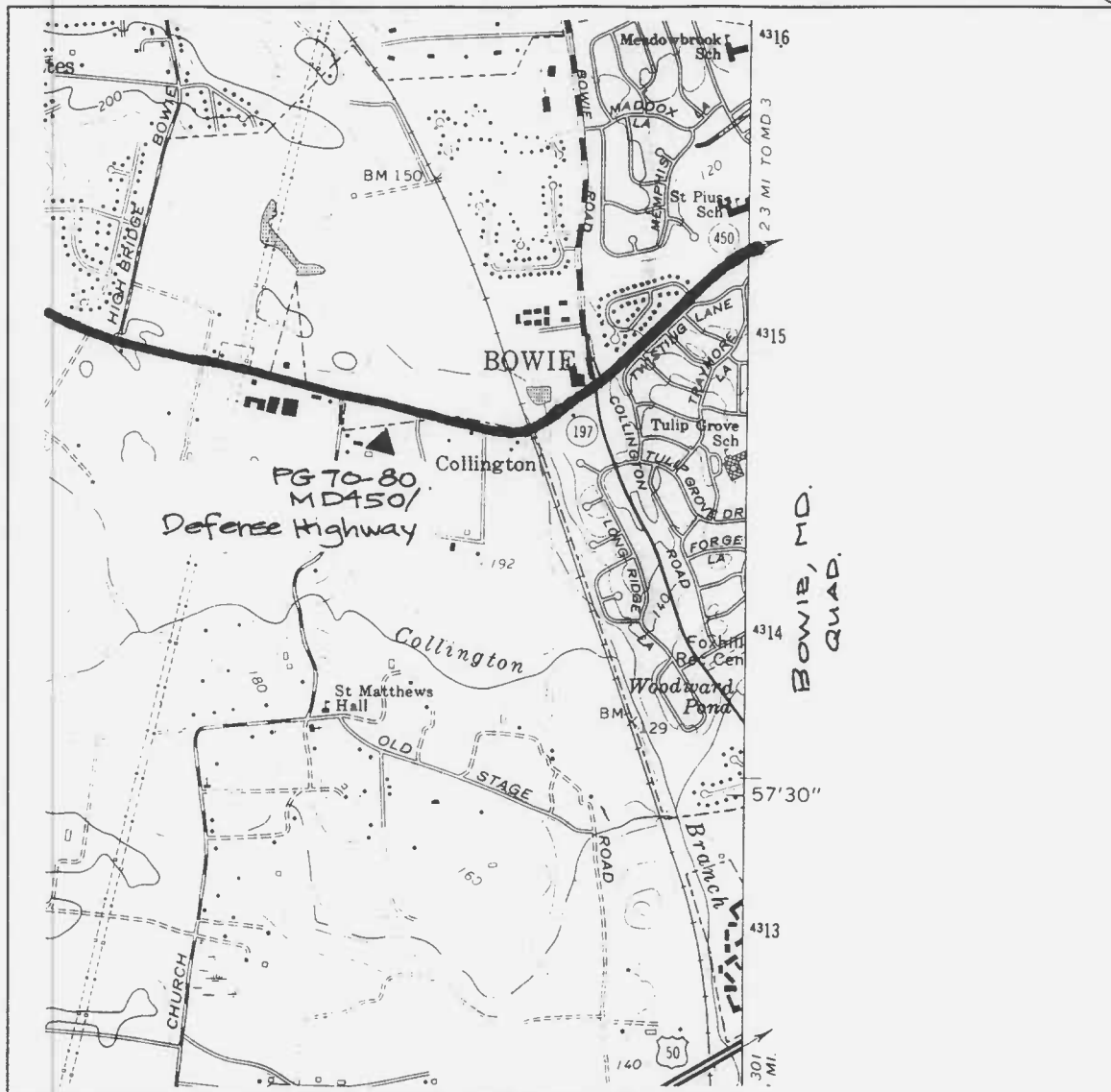
CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

Survey No. PG 70-80 (3 of 4)

Location Map

Resource Name MD 450/Defense Highway

MATCH TO SHEET 2



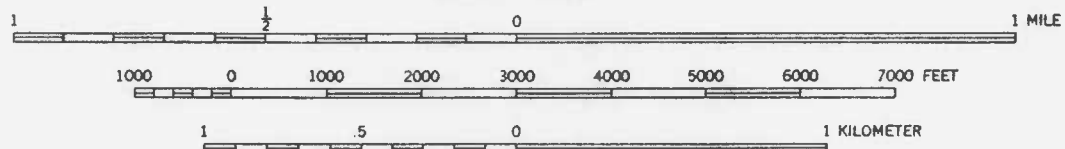
MATCH TO SHEET 4



LANHAM, MD.
38076-H7-TF-024

1965
REVISED 1993
DMA 5661 IV NE-SERIES V833

SCALE 1:24000



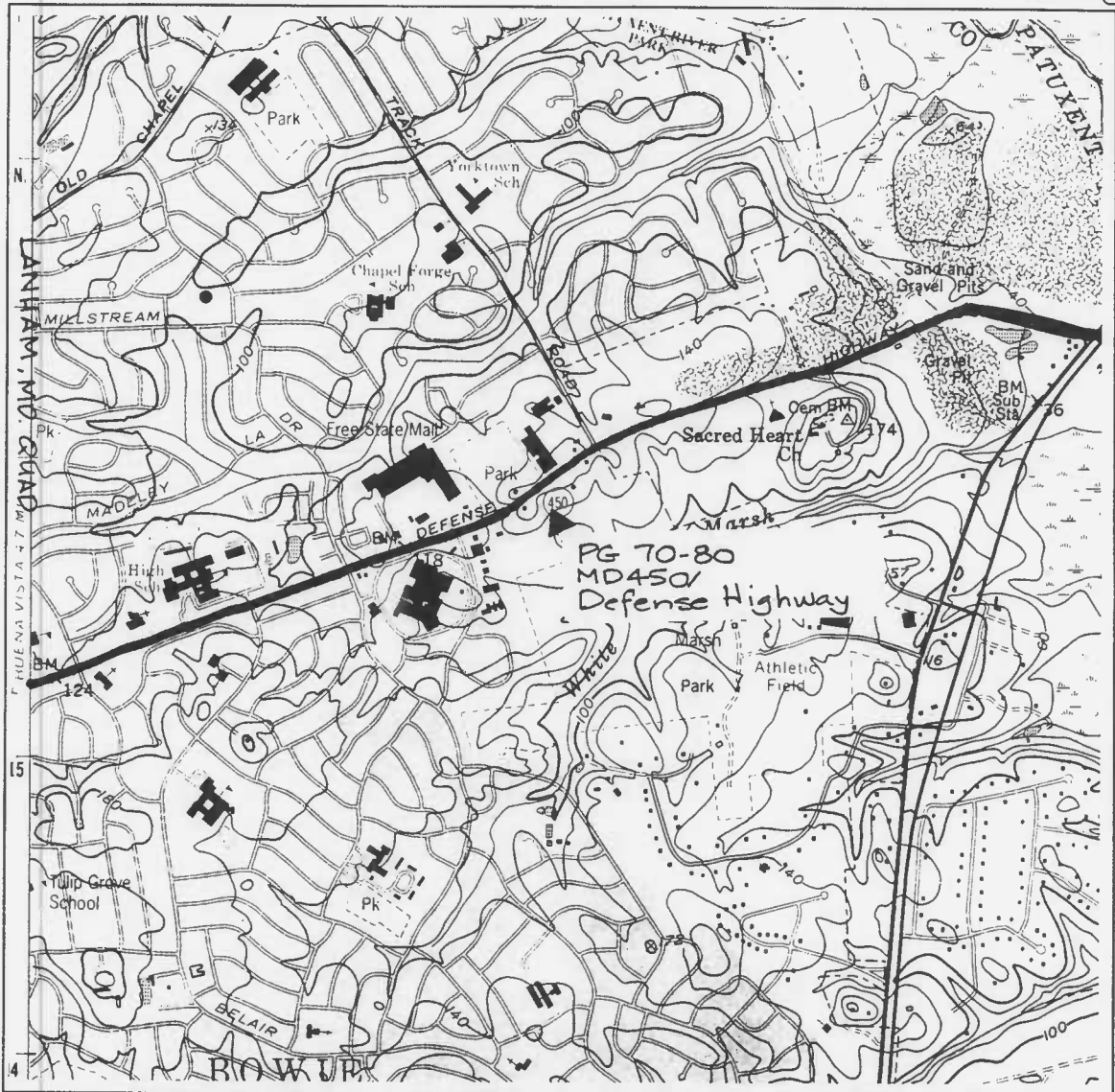
CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

Survey No. PG 70-80 (4 of 4)

Location Map

Resource Name MD450/ Defense Highway

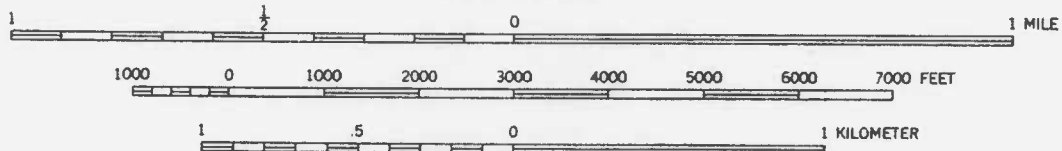
MATCH TO SHEET 3.



BOWIE, MD.
38076-H6-TF-024

1957
REVISED 1993
DMA 5661 I NW-SERIES V833

SCALE 1:24000



CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929



10-10-09

10-10-09

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PS: 1/10/99

MD 12/10/99 12/10/99 12/10/99

12/10/99 12/10/99 12/10/99

12/10/99

12/10/99

Michael Walker Jr. 12/10/99

Spring 12/10/99 12/10/99 12/10/99

12/10/99



10/10/20

MD450/Defence 2.00.00

Police Sergeant 2.00.00

2.00.00

2.00.00

Police Sergeant 2.00.00

Police Sergeant 2.00.00

Police Sergeant 2.00.00

2.00.00

MD450 -



1st 10-5

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PG 72-12

"Daring"

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Re: [illegible]

10450/2011 [illegible]

[illegible]

COWEN

1/8/1999

Michael Baker Inc.

Facing east, intersection of W. [illegible]

Wilmington Rd.

T. 4



MG 70-21

MD 450 / reference to the

Prince George's Co. MD

COB

1. 8/1/2000

2. 1/1/2001

3. 1/1/2001 View of MD 450A Church Rd

4. 1/1/2001 View of MD 450A Church Rd

8 of 11



2000-2001

National Defense University
Karl von Clausewitz School of War

C. C. C.

Michael Baker Corp.

Engineering, with a focus on the use of
of modern development

9.2.1



Big 10 - 80

100 - 100 / 100 - 100

100 - 100 / 100 - 100

C. Owen.

100 - 100

Michael K. K. K. K.

For the 100, 100 of 100 - 100 Church Rd

100 - 100 / 100 - 100

100 - 100



HARDWARE CITY HOME CENTER

WHOLESALE FURNITURE
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
SAVINGS UP TO
40-60% OFF
10AM-5PM

1/2" x 1/2" x 1/2"

1/2" x 1/2" x 1/2"

1/2" x 1/2" x 1/2"

1/2" x 1/2" x 1/2"

1/2" x 1/2" x 1/2"

1/2" x 1/2" x 1/2"

Facing South, 1/2" x 1/2" x 1/2" on
South side of MD 450 near Church Rd.

1 of 1